

Trawlers CREW ESCAPES on strike 'CHOP' ERROR

ON TOP of the fight with Britain the Icelandic Government has another fishing battle on hand — this time with its own trawlermen.

A row over wages has provoked a strike among the Icelandic fleet, which is spreading into a national stoppage of all organised labour.

Iceland's fishermen are reported to be caught between declining catches and soaring inflation. The fishermen have remained in port since last Saturday, and the general strike was expected to start this week.

TWO MORE Grimsby trawlers fell victim to warp-cutting runs by Icelandic gunboats last week.

Ross Rodney and William Wilberforce both had one warp scythed through during the night of February 11 and 12 by the converted stern trawler *Baldur*. They were 40 miles north-east of Iceland.

The incidents provoked immediate outbursts of 'reckless seamanship' by British skippers, who claimed *Baldur* passed much too close to the trawlers.

The attack on *Ross Rodney* was so badly hashed that the cutting device caught in her gear and ran over the side of the vessel, endangering her crew. Later the Ministry of Defence endorsed these opinions.

The Icelanders claimed the vessels had their warps cut because they were in an international conservation zone.

The frigate *Lowestoft* was nearby at the time, but unable to prevent the attack due to a rudder defect.

The incidents came in an otherwise relatively quiet

week. The gunboat *Aegir* was believed to have set up the attack by drawing off the frigate *Juno* with a dummy run.

Later *Baldur* was involved in a collision with the frigate *Diomedes* after a series of close manoeuvres, during which Iceland claimed searchlights were used to blind their crew. Both sides claimed the other was at fault.

Diomedes sustained slight damage to her bows and *Baldur* was dented on her port quarter.



IN AN effort to find a solution to the cod war, Dr. Joseph Luns, secretary general of NATO, was invited to London last week. He is seen here (left) at the Foreign Office with James Callaghan, foreign secretary, and Fred Peart, minister of Agriculture and Fisheries. At an earlier meeting in Washington, Dr. Luns told the matter of the fishing dispute with President Ford and secretary of state, Henry Kissinger.

'Nightmare' if quota is reduced

A GRIM warning of the consequences if Iceland refused to compromise in the cod war has been given by Herry Fairbotham, president of the Fleetwood Fishing Vessel Owners' Association.

This came last week after the announcement that Britain had said she would restrict her cod catch in the Icelandic area to 85,000 tons, also reduce the number of vessels working there from 139 to 105.

When the Iceland reaction to this announcement was cool to say the least, Mr. Fairbotham said: "It looks to me as though the Icelanders are expecting the quota to be even less than this — if they intend to settle at all. And at the rate they are going on they don't seem too keen to come to an agreement."

"I would think that 85,000 tons is just about as low as Britain can be expected to go and keep the industry even reasonably viable."

"If Iceland is not prepared to accept something in that region, it's going to be an absolute nightmare for Fleetwood."

"Already there is not enough fish coming into the port. To cut the quota by a third is going to make things

even worse, unless the industry can manage to diversify."

"There is the question of catching other deep sea varieties but, just because you can catch it, does not mean the housewives will eat it. There are problems of processing the fish."

Also on the Iceland front, the BBC came in for heavy criticism from the north for North Fylde, White Clegg, last week. He accused them of "blatantly misleading" reports about the Icelandic situation.

He claimed that they were taking a pro-Iceland line and is angry at BBC reports of camera crews being on board the Iceland gunboat *Tyr* during incidents involving the Royal Navy. He said: "It is as if we had put a camera crew aboard *Bismarck* and *Armada* to give German and Spanish propaganda."

Catch record

A NEW weekly catch record for the West Sutherland port of Killochhervie has been set by the Buckie boat *Aggie* (Skipper Eddie Simpson). Her catch for the week ending February 7 was worth £5,000.

WYRE EYES LAID-UP SCOTS SHIPS

FLEETWOOD'S Wyre Trawlers Ltd, which last week denied rumours that its fleet is to be transferred to Grimsby, has now announced plans to expand.

John Heelan, the firm's manager at Fleetwood, said last week: "We are hoping to get another two or three ships for Fleetwood."

He was hoping to go this week to Aberdeen and, possibly, Granton, with the firm's superintendent, Bert Shorrocks, and chief skipper Syd Chisley.

Mr. Heelan said: "We will see if any of the ships laid-up there would be suitable for

Fleetwood. Many of our paratively modern trawlers are tied up there."

"One of the chief factors behind this is that so many men up there have left the firm for the oil industry."

This has come as a welcome change from grimness surrounding the local industry recently, and more ships have been going to work from the port.

With unemployment in the town running at around 10 per cent, the national average, the firm would obviously be big help to ease local employment.

Year after year after year SUCCESS



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'Fishgraph K' and 'Graphette K' were again the most consistently productive fishing echometers in 1975. Always among the top catchers and top grossers in every class, Marconi Marine fishing echometers continue their record of success — year after year after year!

Every one of these boats used Marconi Marine fishing echometers. With final placings still awaited, these are certainly among the top names of 1975.

ABERDEEN

Near Water:
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Owner: The John Wood Group Ltd.
Jessie (Skipper — J. Duncan)
Owner: The John Wood Group Ltd.
Sealgar (Skipper — William Walker)
Owner: The John Wood Group Ltd.
Middle Water:
Middle Water (Skipper — R. Pine)
Owner: The John Wood Group Ltd.
Ben Hellen (Skipper — A. Campbell)
Owner: Richard Irvin and Sons Ltd.
Distant Water:
Ben Shrocks (Skipper — W. Fry)
Owner: Richard Irvin & Sons Ltd.

FLEETWOOD

Below 110ft fishing all grounds:
David Wilson (Skipper — J. H. Banks)
Owner: Hazel Steam Fishing Co. Ltd.

Grossing — 110 to 135ft fishing all grounds:
Wyre Vanguard (Skipper — E. Hargreaves)
Owner: British United Trawlers Ltd.
Over 110ft fishing all grounds:
Boston Stirling (Skipper — W. Budge)
Owner: Boston Deep Sea Fisheries Ltd.

GRANTON

Grossing:
Ross Melbard (Skipper — E. Wood)
Owner: British United Trawlers Ltd.
HULL:
Oleant Water Challenge Cup
Lord St. Vincent (Skipper — B. Sipevic and O. Grever)
Owner: Hollar Brothers Ltd.
Ross Canaveral (Skipper — M. F. Redfern)
Owner: Hudson Brothers Trawlers Ltd.
Somerset Maughan
(Skipper — F. E. Woodbridge)
Owner: Nowington Steam Trawling Co. Ltd.

LOWESTOFT

Suffolk Challenger (Skipper — R. D. Atkinson)
Owner: Small & Co. (Lowestoft) Ltd.
Suffolk Venture (Skipper — J. Peck)
Owner: Small & Co. (Lowestoft) Ltd.

MILFORD HAVEN

Brande Wilson (Skipper — R. Evans)
Owner: Hubert Jones Ltd.
Piston Sea Eagle (Skipper — J. Brodie)
Owner: Norrad Trawlers Ltd.
Rosevear (Skipper — A. Simpson)
Owner: Norrad Trawlers Ltd.

NORTH SHIELDS

Grossing:
Ben Chaw (Skipper — T. F. Jameson)
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NOTICE

Voluntary Arrangement for Temporary Aid to Small Boats, etc. in respect of period 1st January-30th June, 1975

(NOT SEPTEMBER AS STATED IN LAST WEEK'S ADVERTISEMENT)

DISBURSEMENT OF FUND

Owners/part owners of EITHER Scottish inshore fishing boats under 40 registered length OR of Scottish shall fish fishing boats over that length who were not entitled to subsidy for the above period on the weight of their shall fish catch exceeded that of their white fish and/or herring catch during said period, wishing to participate in the disbursement of this fund must submit their claim in writing to us to reach the subscribers by not later than 1st March, 1976.

Claims received thereafter will not be entertained.

Claimants who must be full time fishermen must state:

1. Their full name and address.
2. Name, port of registry, fishing number and registered length of vessel.
3. For vessels of registered length 40' and over, total weight of (a) shell fish and (b) white fish and/or herring caught and landed in the six months ended 30th June, 1975.
4. Total complement of the vessel.
5. Port(s) of landing fish and total number of such landings during said period.

All claims received immediately will be vetted by a joint committee of the undersigned Associations and that payment, of such amounts as said joint committee shall in its sole discretion decide, will be made in respect of approved claims.

BRANDER & CRUICKSHANK

SECRETARIES,
The Scottish Herring Producers' Association Limited
The Scottish Inshore White Fish Producers' Association Limited
10 QUEEN'S TERRACE, ABERDEEN AB9 1QJ
8 February, 1976

COMMENT

No money to spin

IN YEARS gone by, our annual review of the top-earning ships in the country went under the title of *The Moneyspinners*. For obvious reasons this is a thing of the past and this week the results for 1975 are under a rather more sober heading.

From almost every port the story is the same: outstanding performances by skippers, vessels and crews eroded away by costs. One thing is certain, the deep-sea industry could not survive another year like the last and, yet, there is every prospect that things are going to get worse.

For fishermen there was an early warning of what 1976 might bring: the cut-back off Iceland is going to mean the loss of 400 jobs. For the owners, it means that a year without Government subsidy will not even allow the top ships to break even.

Last year, the Government subsidy was a lifeline for the deep-sea industry. This year the economic conditions for fishing are still as gloomy, but the subsidy has been withdrawn. There is no logic at all in this kind of Government thinking, unless it is to be deduced that they want to preside over the end of British deep-sea fishing.

The resumption of subsidy would only be considered, said the Minister of State for Fisheries and Agriculture, Edward Bishop, in the House of Commons last week, if an "overwhelming" case could be made by the industry. By this he was referring to projections being worked on by the British Trawlers' Federation.

We suggest Mr. Bishop reads our feature this week. He will have all the indications he needs that subsidy is a vital issue again.

fishing news

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Norwegian escorted in

SHELTAND lifeboat was called out and helicopters alerted at the weekend when a Norwegian liner reported she was sinking 15 miles north west of Foulca.

The 95ft. *Leitosund* was leaking in the hull where echo sounding gear is fitted, and the mayday was called off when the leak was located.

The British trawler *Gull*, which had steamed from a position 50 miles away, was only 20 minutes from the Norwegian boat when she was told her services would not be required. Another Norwegian fishing boat was diverting to escort *Leitosund* into Scalloway harbour.

LOSSIE DRUMS

IN *Fishing News* last week it was reported that the Peterhead seiner *Illustrious* had been fitted with rope drums at a cost of £8,000.

We would like to make it clear that this figure included installation charges. The price of the drums was £4,500 and we apologise for any confusion this report may have caused.

A new boat being built at Herd and Mackenzie of Buckie for local fisherman, 'Billy' Humphries, is also fitted with Lossie drums. She is a 75ft. wooden-hulled seiner. Agent for Lossie Hydraulics in England is James Talbot at Wolland. He can be contacted at Wolland 823638.

PURSER 'BAN' IS REJECTED

THE GOVERNMENT has refused to restrict purse seiners for mackerel off Cornwall and Devon.

Robert Hicks, Conservative MP for Bodmin, had demanded a ban on pursers and also called for a temporary restriction on all vessels over 50ft., pending an inquiry into the area's problems.

Edward Bishop, Minister of State for Agriculture and Fisheries, in a written reply, says there are no plans to restrict the access either of numbers or of classes of vessels, or to outlaw particular types of fishing gear in the fishery.

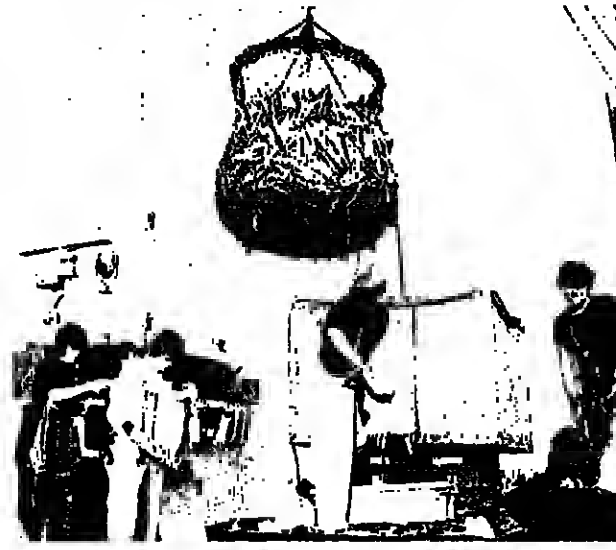
"The Government's powers to act in this way are limited to cases where there is a conservation need."

The mackerel working group of ICES is meeting next month to assess western-mackerel stocks, also recommend to the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission conservation catch quotas.

After several days of poor weather the Cornish mackerel fleet was busy again at the weekend.

But the biggest landing came from the record holder *Gellie Rose*, the Scottish purse seiner, with a heavy tonnage of mackerel landed at Penzance.

There were some 170 boats in Newlyn harbour on Saturday.



The purse seiner *Gellie Rose* unloading at Penzance.

day, and almost 150 of these were the smaller mackerel boats, many of them on a quota of 100-stone or less.

The secretary of the Newlyn and Mousehole Fishermen's Association, Mrs. Daphne Lawry, admitted that the season had been poor.

They had made a living wage, but needed more than this to compensate for the lean times in the spring and autumn.

"It is very worrying," said Mrs. Lawry. "Not only are we catching too many mackerel for the stocks, but also for the markets, which are badly glutted and the prices are going down. Control is needed now."

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Going Dutch

THE WHITE Fish Authority is organising an Export Trade Mission of UK fish and shellfish merchants and processors to visit the Netherlands from May 1 to May 6.

This follows the successful venture in France and Germany last year.

They plan to visit the principle fish markets and at least one major Dutch fish processing plant. Overnight stays are at The Hague, Haarlem, Kampen and Amsterdam, in addition to calls at Scheveningen, IJmuiden.

GRABBERS' BALL AID

SOUTH Devon Shellfishermen Ltd. is holding its annual Crabbers' Ball at the Seymour Hotel, Totnes, on Friday, February 27.

This year's raffle is being held in aid of member, Eric Dietin, who lost an arm in an accident at sea last autumn.

Harlingen and Urk. A representative of the WFA trade office, who will be leading the mission, said: "They will discuss the prospects and means of expanding British fish sales to the Netherlands."



DUE to health reasons Mr. Dietin, who has been the Middlesbrough director of establishments since 1971.

Smaller ship pays off

FLEETWOOD'S new small stern trawler *Norina* (Skipper Frank Wilson) is proving more than capable of keeping up with the bigger vessels of the class.

Last week she returned from Iceland with 1,357 kits.

including more than 900 of cod, which sold for £23,771.

Earlier in the week there was also a good grossing for the small stern trawler *Boston Stirling* (Skipper Bill Bridge) which made £17,806 from 943 kits.

Top ship honours for the week went to the large *Gouina*-type stern trawler *Irwen* (Skipper Gordon Wignall). She worked off Iceland catching 1,399 kits, including nearly 1,200 of cod, which sold for £25,860.

Her sister-ship *Lunedo* (Skipper Bill Reader) landed 1,270 kits, which sold for £21,823. The lower average was due to *Lunedo* having only 900 of cod in her total, 200 of cod being the other main variety.

It was a good week for *David Wilson* (Skipper John Bonks) which was last year's top ship in the 100-110ft. class. She had the market to herself when she landed 404 kits, including 85 of hake, 50 of cod, 85 of haddock, 155 of cod and 10 of dogs.

Markets were good and she made £8,220.

Landings in the near water section was *Royalist* (Skipper Ken Beavere) which had a total of 281 kits, including 20 of hake, 40 of cod, 90 of haddock, 75 of cod, 10 of roker and 12 of dogs, which sold for £5,353.

the decision was changed and he was taken in.

William Sullivan (81), a greaser on board the Fleetwood trawler *Boston Morador*, injured his hip.

He was transferred to the support vessel *House* where a doctor decided that he should be landed in Iceland. The Icelanders refused to allow him to be landed, so *House* began to make for the Faroes.

Then the Icelanders changed their minds and *House* turned back to Iceland and landed Mr. Sullivan at Neskaupstadur, from where he was taken to hospital. His condition was later said to be satisfactory.

Mr. Sullivan is originally a Swensen man and, before entering the fishing industry, served for several years on Merchant Navy vessels.

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FLEETWOOD'S new lifeboat, *Lady of Lancashire*, went into action last week when the 62ft. near water trawler *Dufala* (above) then sank.

The crew was taken on board the lifeboat and returned to Fleetwood. None were injured.

Dufala, a wooden craft, has been one of the leading near water trawlers sailing from the port, and was thought to have been the time of the grounding, a catch of around 30-kits on board.

Trawler repair firm is closing

NORTH Humberdale is to lose its biggest trawler repair firm.

The Hull-based Humber St. Andrew's Engineering Co. Ltd., part of the BUT Group since 1970, is to close down.

No date has been set, but 276 employees will be affected.

The position was outlined in a statement given to the press last week by Christopher Mannall, a director of Humber St. Andrew's.

It read: "The directors of

Humber St. Andrew's Engineering Co. regret having to announce that, as a result of continuing losses following the sharp decline in the number of fishing vessels operating out of Hull, it has become necessary to close the whole of its engineering activities.

"Attempts have been made to diversify into other engineering work but, due to the general recession in the United Kingdom and the acute difficulties in obtaining suitable alternative work in this locality, these efforts

have not been successful.

"Arrangements are now in hand for consultations with trade union and staff representatives and the appropriate Government departments."

It is understood that every effort is being made to ensure an orderly run-down of the company's activities and that, in view of pending discussions, the company has not committed itself over the length of the run-down period.

As agents for Brattvaag winches, Tanford steering and other marine gear, HSA will be holding discussions about future arrangements for equipment which has been handled by them.

NEW PURSER IN NORWAY FOR REPAIR

THE 135 ft. Frassburgh purse seiner *Chris Andra* has more than a damaged stela thruster, as reported in *Fishing News* last week.

She was examined at Karmsøy, Norway, where she was built, on February 6.

A surveyor reported that the damage, alleged to have been sustained by grounding on February 3 while entering Frassburgh harbour, needs the following repairs: 15 m. of bar keel needs to be renewed and the keel is bent

and scored for its entire length; stela plating on both sides of bar keel needs renewing; buckled and torn stela dome needs renewing complete; starboard side echo sounder transducer scored and needs renewing; port echo sounder transducer buckled; main engine may need re-chocking as damage to bar keel is under main engine; and solepiece of rudder contacted bottom, so steering gear needs check for possible damage.



Chris Andra - bottom damaged coming into port.

SKIPPER Tom Whitcombe (56), one of Grimsby's leading distant water skippers who died suddenly in a Grimsby hospital after a short illness on February 2 (see *Fishing News*, February 8), came from a family steeped in fishing.

His father and grandfather were both highly successful skippers who obtained their tickets the hard way - by practical application and dedication - and Tom followed their examples.

He entered the industry in the mid 1930s, when Grimsby was still a one-industry town and at the height of a deep depression when jobs were scarce.

Skipper Whitcombe made the most of his chance, even turning war service in the Navy into gaining further valuable seafaring experience.

By the time he was 30 he was already one of Grimsby's authority. Don-skippers. For over 15 years Skipper Whitcombe was sailed with the old Northern Trawlers Ltd. and was very successful with the pre-war and two daughters.

OBITUARY

German-class coal and oil burning steamers, before moving onto more modern steam trawlers like *Northern Chief* and *Northern Eagle*.

Then, in the early 1960s, he joined forces with fellow skippers Jimmy Nunn, Billy Balls and Paul Adeleatesson to help launch the Abunda Fishing Co. Ltd.

The company operated three deep-sea motor trawlers with Skipper Whitcombe as command of *Belgium*, a job he relinquished last October, even though the company had sold out to the Boston Group.

A fair, modest and unpretentious man, Skipper Whitcombe's life was fishing. He became so knowledgeable on the fishing grounds off eastern Iceland that he was considered the leading authority.

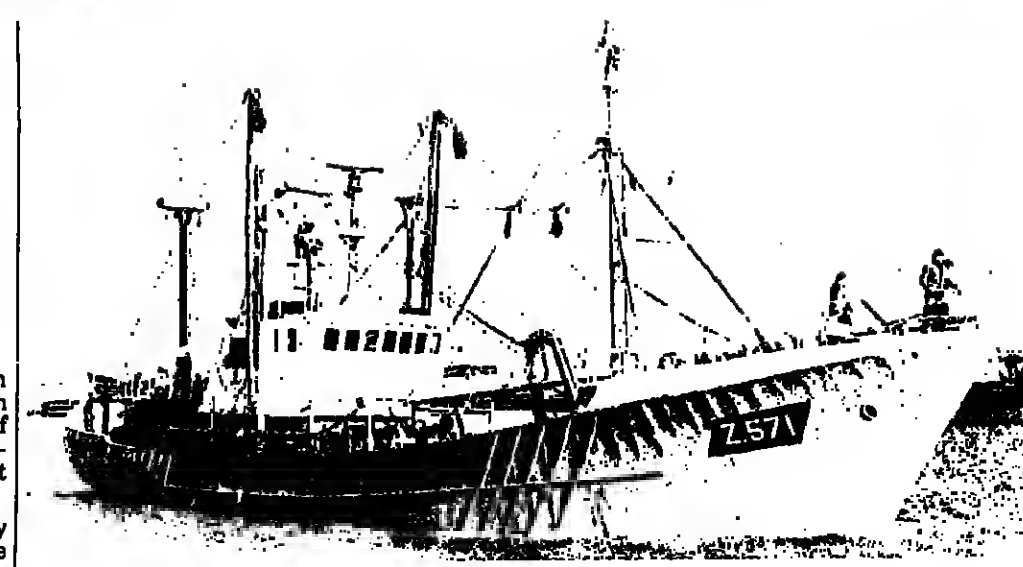
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Zephyr does it again

THE Belgian beam trawler *Zephyr* (Z 871) set-up another record grossing for a Belgian vessel landing at Grimsby last week with £17,800 from 766 kits.

Zephyr (above) is making a habit of rewriting the record books at Grimsby and this is the third time she has beaten allcomers in her class during the past six months.

Skipper Roger Adux, however, was rather disappointed when he landed on Thursday last week and told *Fishing News* he had expected to make £20,000. "But the markets were not very good."

The beamer had a big catch of 570 kits of big-small plaice and lost 85 kits to pet food and 20 of large to fish meal. As usual she was agitated by the local firm of A. E. Richardson & Co.

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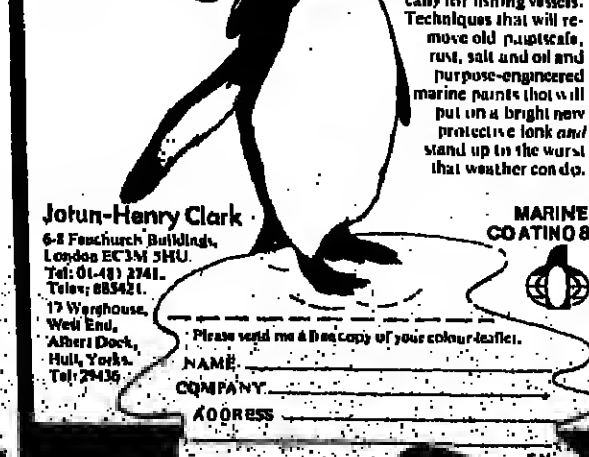
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Firemen save sinking boat

FIREMEN went by sea to Newlyn when the 50ft. Porthleven mackerel fishing boat *Melanie Clare* was sinking on Sunday.

They were taken out into the middle of the harbour where the boat was going down from a leak below the waterline, just before a planned fishing trip.

Penzance firemen pumped the water out and the boat is being repaired.

The decision has been made by the port's harbour committee following protests by fishermen that the original increase would lead to a crisis in the industry.

A cut of one half pence in the pound off fish landing dues has been decided following an allocation of £5,000 to the harbour committee by the policy and resources committee.

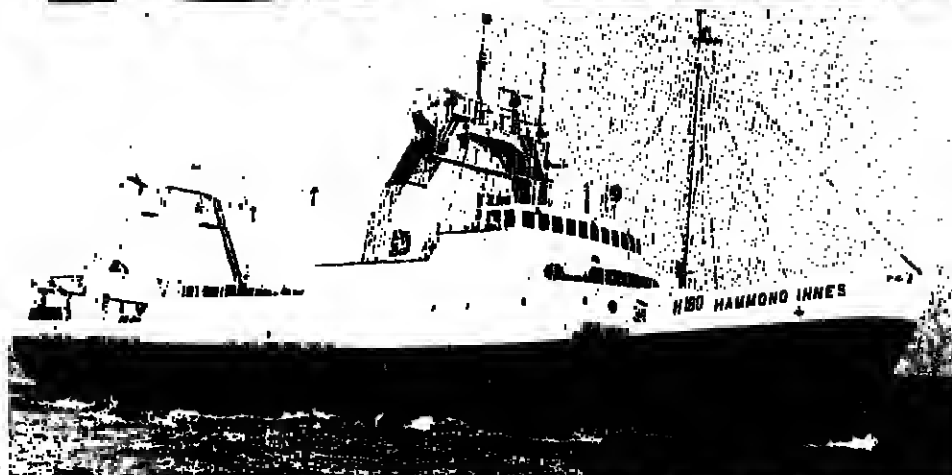


PROPOSED increases of 25 per cent in harbour dues for fishermen at Scarborough are to be cut.

The decision has been made by the port's harbour committee following protests by fishermen that the original increase would lead to a crisis in the industry.

Telephone: 07322 65111

TOP SHIPS OF '77



Catches and earnings by Newington's *Hammond Innes* during 1975. She landed 13 trips at Hull and spent 288 days at sea. She caught a total of 35,783 kits to gross £539,289, attaining a daily average of £1,809.7.

January 8	White Sea, 25 days (C. Dunn)	2,182 kits	£41,589
February 4	Norwegian Coast, 25 days (R. Taylor)	4,343 kits	£69,767
February 26	Norwegian Coast, 20 days (R. Taylor)	3,025 kits	£41,657
March 24	Norwegian Coast, 24 days (R. Taylor)	3,260 kits	£47,212
April 26	Bear Island/N.C., 22 days (R. Taylor)	2,349 kits	£24,349
May 10	White Sea, 22 days (R. Taylor)	3,442 kits	£46,587
June 23	Iceland, 20 days (R. Taylor)	2,484 kits	£38,677
July 16	Iceland, 21 days (B. Taylor)	2,342 kits	£33,459
August 12	Iceland, 24 days (B. Taylor)	3,538 kits	£38,194
September 4	Iceland, 21 days (R. Taylor)	2,423 kits	£37,405
October 8	Iceland, 23 days (R. Taylor)	1,471 kits	£30,703
November 6	White Sea, 26 days (R. Taylor)	2,474 kits	£48,800
December 3	Bear Island, 25 days (R. Taylor)	2,450 kits	£52,900

1975 Hull Distant Water Challenge Shield top 20 (figures in brackets are last year's position, catch and points):

	Kits landed	Points	Points
1. (1) <i>Hammond Innes</i> (Newington).....	38,702 (31,275)	42,982 (38,472)	
2. (4) <i>Ross Orion</i> (BUT).....	33,058 (28,637)	37,217 (30,712)	
3. (43) <i>Ross Canaveral</i> (BUT).....	25,877 (21,225)	34,341 (19,342)	
4. (5) <i>Somerses Moughom</i> (Newington).....	32,433 (28,732)	34,009 (29,955)	
5. (14) <i>Lord St. Vincent</i> (BUT).....	28,218 (18,594)	33,746 (19,174)	
6. (2) <i>C. S. Forester</i> (Newington).....	29,246 (31,810)	33,633 (32,360)	
7. (13) <i>Arctic Cavalier</i> (Boyd).....	27,827 (28,611)	30,300 (26,968)	
8. (16) <i>St. Geroulus</i> (Hamling).....	26,340 (23,758)	29,030 (31,284)	
9. (3) <i>Westella</i> (Marr).....	25,513 (30,915)	28,792 (31,133)	
10. (28) <i>St. Giles</i> (Hamling).....	24,022 (22,056)	28,735 (22,766)	
11. (32) <i>Ross Trafalgar</i> (BUT).....	22,312 (21,306)	28,102 (22,356)	
12. (10) <i>Arctic Corsair</i> (Boyd).....	24,818 (28,505)	28,095 (27,728)	
13. (17) <i>Lock Eriboll</i> (BUT).....	22,873 (24,511)	27,406 (26,712)	
14. (45) <i>Joseph Conrad</i> (Newington).....	23,403 (19,895)	27,216 (18,597)	
15. (9) <i>Ross Altair</i> (BUT).....	22,591 (27,650)	27,126 (27,973)	
16. (7) <i>St. Dominic</i> (Hamling).....	23,977 (29,455)	26,845 (28,064)	
17. (8) <i>Ross Sirius</i> (BUT).....	22,042 (28,027)	26,753 (28,439)	
18. (16) <i>Arctic Vindol</i> (Boyd).....	21,411 (26,198)	26,323 (26,778)	
19. (35) <i>Kingston Sapphire</i> (BUT).....	20,058 (19,078)	25,611 (21,394)	
20. (14) <i>Kingston Beryl</i> (BUT).....	22,616 (26,249)	25,506 (26,872)	

"THERE wasn't much to put in the bank", said Mike Burton, chairman of Newington Trawlers, after his ship *Hammond Innes* had become the first British wet fish trawler to earn more than £4 million in a year.

"*Hammond Innes* paid her way, but she's a fairly new ship carrying heavy interest and depreciation charges", he said.

The top earning — and catching — wet fish stern trawler in the British fleet, the Hull-based *Hammond Innes* battered her 1974 performance by grossing £539,289 for 36,783 kits caught during a sentence of 288 days (see trip table).

In 1974 she grossed £448,778 for 31,296 kits, which gave her average daily earnings of £1,433.5. Last year her daily average shot up to £1,809.7 — an outstanding achievement.

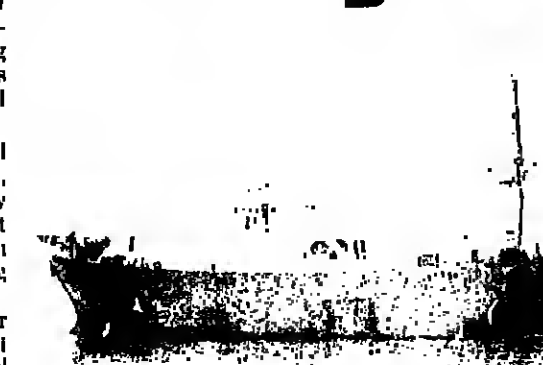
She made 13 trips last year (one more than in 1974), but it is estimated that she would have needed to earn another £30,000 to keep pace with British inflation.

Most credit for the ship's fantastic performance must go to Skipper Dick Taylor who, before exchanging commands with Skipper Bill Brettell last year, was with C. S. Forester, Newington's other wet fish stern trawler. Dick Taylor took out *Hammond Innes* on 10 of her 13 trips, the relief skipper being his brother Brinn Taylor (twice) and Colin Dunn (once).

Skipper Dick Taylor's highest grossings came in his first and last trips of the year. He started off with £59,707 and finished the year by making £52,900.

On December 3 Skipper Bill Brettell rejoined *Hammond Innes* with which, in

'Little profit after Innes' £1½m year.



BUT's Hull-based *Norsa* is being tipped as the winner of the Dolphin Bowl national freezer trawler contest.

February 1974, he had set up the present national trip earnings record of £74,188 for 4,190 kits.

Hammond Innes has won the port shield two years running, being continuously in the lead in this wet fishing handicap event which takes into account average speeds of vessels, as well as catches and grossings.

Her closest challenger last year was BUT's sidewinder *Ross Orion*. She finished as a worthy runner up after taking fourth place in 1974.

The regular skipper is Alf Osler, who has been with *Ross Orion* for five years. He has spent all his 22 years as a skipper with the same owners. Last year he went out with *Ross Orion* on all but two trips.

In the 1975 competition *Ross Orion* caught 33,058 kits valued at £487,188, while *Hammond Innes* was credited with catches of 35,783 kits and £539,289.

Norfolk *Ross Orion*, not BUT's third-placed *Ross Canaveral*, fished the Icelandic Coast last year. Both mainly won in the White Sea.

Ross Canaveral, whose command was shared by skippers M. Redfearn, Jack Lilley and K. Nielsen, put in 13 full trips. The vessel made £464,907 for 25,877 kits, while Newington's *Somerses Moughom* (fourth) realised £469,198 for 32,433 kits.

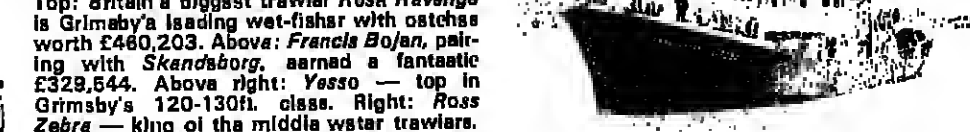
Reliefs

Skipper Eddie Wooldridge took *Somerses Moughom* out ten times, his reliefs for a total of five trips being skippers B. Taylor, J. Cannon and F. Sainty.

Although Hull started 1975 with 37 wet fish ships operational, the number was 35 by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, Hull has 37 freezer trawlers compared with 35 a year ago. These include the part-freezer *Lord Nelson* and the recently introduced freezer *Junella*.

Top: Britain's biggest trawler *Rosa Revenge* is Grimsby's leading wet-fish trawler with catches worth £460,203. Above: *Francis Bojan*, plying with *Skandsborg*, earned a fantastic £329,544. Above right: *Yesso* — top in Grimsby's 120-130ft. class. Right: *Ross Zebra* — King of the middle water trawlers.



Revenge leads BUT coup at Grimsby

BRITAIN'S biggest side trawler *Rosa Revenge* is back on top at Grimsby after taking second place in 1974 to *Boston Comanche*.

Rosa Revenge earned £460,203 from 30,351 kits caught during 14 trips. This tally by Skipper Johnny Meadows included Grimsby's biggest single local landing in 1975 — 3,196 kits last April.

Grimsby lost one quarter of its operational wet fish fleet during 1975, finishing with just 71 working vessels, but the year — the worst since the last war — would have been an even bigger disaster without the Government subsidy. Only a handful of vessels kept pace with inflation despite increased grossings in most sections.

Procession

Rosa Revenge headed a procession of BUT vessels which made a clean sweep of all the major placings in category 1 (140 ft. plus). But it might have been a different story if *Boston Boeing* had not been out of action for a spell.

She made just eight trips, but was runner-up in the daily averages (£1,517) behind *Ross Revenge* (£1,592) and was third best average tripper (£29,380).

In second place on grossings was the 20-year-old steamer *Northern Sky* (£423,254) — already a casualty of 1978 and laid-up ahead of *Vivorio* (£420,729) and *Ross Renouin* (£413,578).

This section began in 1975 with 23 motor and 19 steam trawlers, but within two months crippling increases in heavy fuel oil had trimmed the steamers down to six working vessels (all German-built and BUT-owned). Ten were sold, all but one for

scrap, and the three others were still on BUT's books at the year's end.

The motor trawlers completed 317 trips, the six working steamers 86 trips and the unlucky 13 mounded only 22 trips before the axe fell.

There was also a repeat of the 1973 top placing in category 2 (130-140 ft.), with Consolidated Fisheries' *Spurs* (Skipper W. G. Hardie, Jun.) grossing £336,793 and regaining the title she surrendered in 1974 to the *Boston Group's Prince Philip*, this time second with £314,139. *Corliffe* was again third with £307,012.

Place

Consolidated Fisheries also had the distinction of Grimsby's best grossing by a local trawler in 1975, when *Gillingham* (Skipper Jimmy Hodson) picked up £54,788 early in December with a White Sea ploice catch of 1,759 kits. It now stands as a



new national record for a (39 ft. trawler, bettering the previous record by Consolidated's *Nutts Forest* (Skipper W. G. Hardie, sen.) of £50,934, set up just a week earlier.

At the lower end of category two, BUT swept all challengers aside with its 'cat' class (31 ft. middle water vessels). *Ross Zebra* chalked up £234,042 from 20 trips, followed by *Ross Genet* (£205,317) and *Ross Cougar* (£193,190), with *Ross Tiger* coming out tops as the best average tripper on £11,815 from 12 trips.

Ross Cougar (Skipper Walter Stokes) made the best single grossing of £20,458 from 1,482 kits in July. BUT laid-up *Locarno* during the year, reducing this category to 29 motor trawlers which completed 468 trips.

The H. L. Taylor fleet maintained its hold on category 3 (120-130 ft.). Skipper Peter Brown in *Yesso* (£209,987) headed *Osaka* (£200,100), including a £19,208 grossing from 1,155 kits in July) and *Ogono* (£192,121).

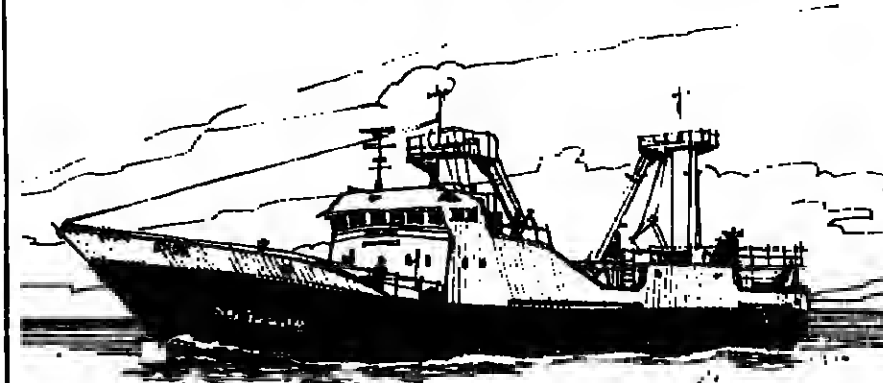
Laid up

The decision by Sir Thomas Robinson & Son (Grimsby) Ltd. to withdraw six middle water vessels during the year meant two trawlers were lost in this division, but the arrival of *Boston Hoi/hex* to fish distant water reduced the deficit to one and the five completed 73 trips.

Taylor was again supreme in category 4 (110-120 ft.) with Skipper George Smith keeping *Erimo* (£165,997) out in front of *Tokio* (£161,804) and *Hondo* (£148,570). This section was weakened by the loss of the other Robinson trawlers (two laid up and two

Continued overleaf

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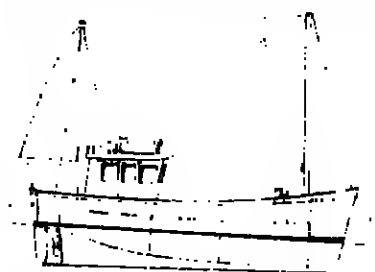
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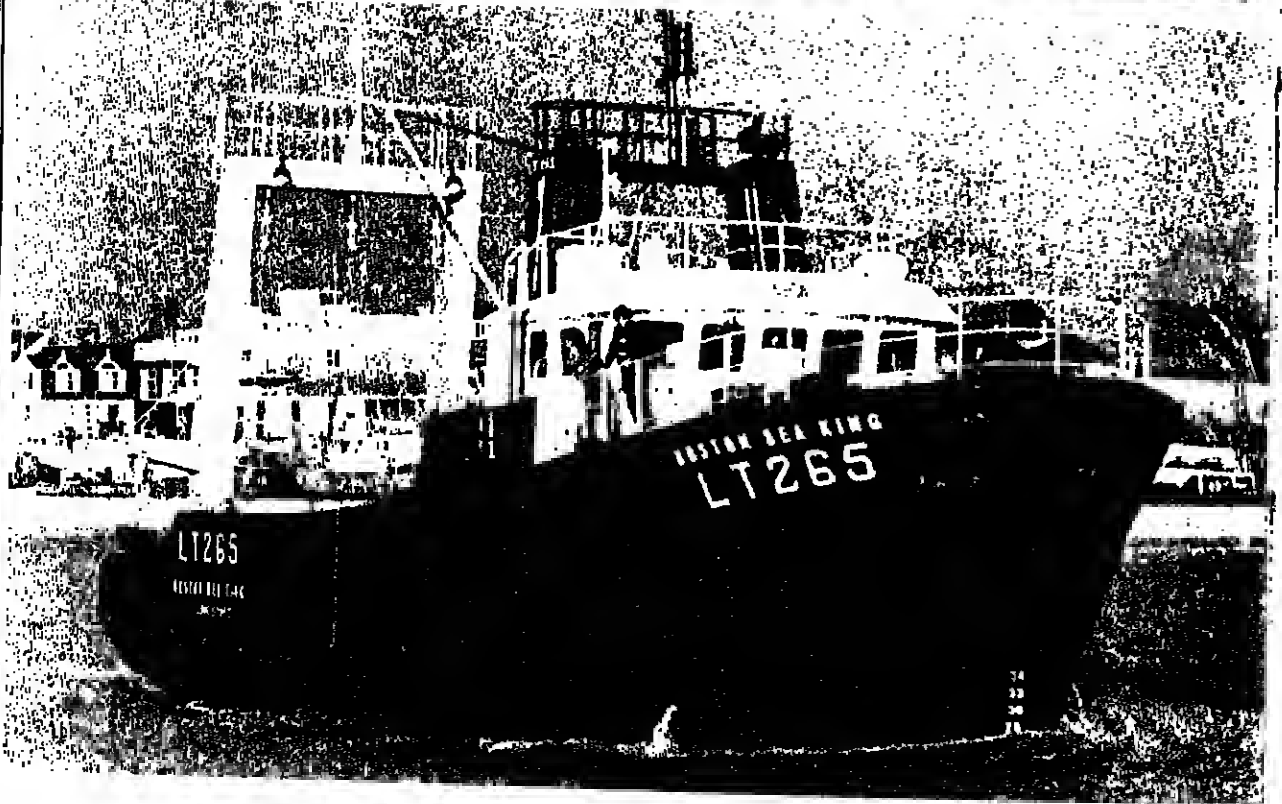
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OUT OF 'SEA DART'



...an 85ft economy trawler

THE LATEST, and perhaps the most impressive, of a growing number of smaller stern trawlers in the 70 to 90 ft. class entered service last month with Boston Deep Sea Fisheries at Lowestoft.

Named *Boston Sea King*, she is the first of a class of three 85 ft. vessels designed by the Industrial Development Unit of the White Fish Authority in conjunction with her owners, Boston Deep Sea Fisheries.

Boston's main object in commissioning the design of this smaller class of wet fish stern trawler was to utilise the experience gained from the operation of the three very successful 118 ft. *Boston Sea Dart* class vessels.

This experience has now been put into a smaller vessel with much greater running economy and nearly the same fishing capability as the larger class.

Faced with the task of putting a gear into a pint pot, the IDU eventually came up with what appeared to be a very promising design. In due

course, and with White Fish Authority approval, an order was placed for three vessels with the Humber-based Drypool Group.

The group sub-contracted the job of building the trawler hulls to the yard of John R. Hepworth & Co. at Paull. At this stage Boston Deep Sea Fisheries had considered operating one, or more, of the trio from North Shields.

Later it was decided to build all three vessels at Lowestoft. In July of last year *Boston Sea King* was launched at Paull, then towed down to Drypool's Selby yard for fitting out — her place on the building berth was taken almost immediately by the keel of the second ship, *Boston Sea Knight*.

Boston Sea King has an overall length of 85 ft. (25.85m.) and a registered length of 78 ft. (23.95m.). Moulded beam is 24 ft. (7.3m.) and moulded depth 11 ft. 6 in. (3.5m.).

The fish room, with a capacity of 105 cu.m., is located in the after part of the vessel, the main accommodation is amidships and the engine room forward.

An unusual feature in this size of vessel is the midships accommodation, and this was thought desirable from the point of view of crew comfort in bad weather.

Sea King has accommodation for eight including skipper, chief engineer and six crew hands. She is built to Lloyd's classification 100A1 stern trawler, including unmonned machinery space classification, and is also designed to comply with all the latest Department of Trade, IMCO and insurance regulations.

The vessel has a full load service speed in excess of 10 knots, with very good manoeuvrability and sea-keeping.

The hull form was tank-tested by the British Hovercraft Corporation in its tank on the lake of Wight for a series of resistance, manoeuvrability and sea-keeping trials.

All three vessels in this new pocket stern trawler class are powered by a Mirraa-Blackstone type B7SL8M marine diesel, with 8 cylinders in line. These

engines have a continuous rating of 700 bhp with a crankshaft speed of some 2500 rpm.

The engine is run at a constant speed and drives a Liaan controllable pitch propeller through an integral reduction gearbox — the propeller speed being 25 rpm. There is a power take off at the forward end of the engine which drives auxiliaries, including a 70 kW alternator, starting air compressor, general service pump, and main winch hydraulic machinery.

A Lister type JW6MA auxiliary engine is provided, with a rating of 105 bhp at 1500 rpm, to drive the 70 kW alternator, general service pump, stand-by air compressor and stand-by hydraulic pump.

The vessel's engine room is extensively alarmed to the wheelhouse, with a repeater alarm to the chief engineer's cabin.

The main control wheel and auxiliary deck machinery is a low pressure hydraulic type by Hydramat Brevetvaag of Norway. The equipment comprises a

CAME 'SEA KING'



Left and above: *Boston Sea King*, the first of three stern trawlers for Lowestoft, could be the shape of Britain's trawling future. The 85-footer is based on the 118 ft. *Boston Sea Dart* class and is the result of co-operation between the Boston Group and the Industrial Development Unit of the White Fish Authority.

main trawl winch, with each drum having a capacity of 273 fathoms of 2 1/2 in. circumference incorporating a Lohus spooling system.

The main winch has a maximum pull in excess of eight tons, with a main pull of approximately five tons, and is controlled pneumatically from the wheelhouse. Included in the auxiliary machinery is a single net drum with detachable main drum and two varying ends — this can either be controlled from the wheelhouse or locally.

The general standard of shipbuilding on *Boston Sea King* is very high, not surprisingly perhaps when one considers the record of her builders. As Cnchrane & Sons Ltd., it completed a very long line of fishing vessels for owners at British ports — although *Boston Sea King* is the first Selby-built trawler to join the Lowestoft fleet for several years. Comparisons between this new boat and the older and larger *Boston Sea Dart* vessels are inevitable.

On *Boston Sea King*, the layout of the working deck is similar to the *Sea Dart* class, except that the main trawl winch is situated on the main deck and not on the after end of the fore-deck. Also, the net drum is situated further forward on the main deck leaving ample working space aft for mending nets, and gutting, etc.

The vessel's fish room hatches are located on the port and starboard side together with fish pounds, leaving the centre of the deck clear for trawling operations.

Boston Sea King's combined stern gantry and aftermast, rather large for an 85-footer, is situated near the stern of the craft, but adequate space is left around her stern working area for the vessel to be converted to either pair-trawling or fly dragging operations. Space is also provided for a power block if required.

The forward part of the main deck incorporates quite large covered storage and net working space and also includes the galley/messroom, skipper's berth, washroom and toilet facilities. As on most modern stern trawlers, the wheelhouse is situated forward above the main deck and has excellent all-round visibility.

A pretty full set of electronic equipment is fitted on *Boston Sea King*, most of which is well grouped around the skipper's chair. The skipper, who has a full view of the trawl deck, controls the main winch and net drum equipment from a console immediately aft of his conning position.

The vessel's electronic outfit includes a Decca Mk. 21 Navigator including an associated marine automatic plotter, a Decca RM916 radar and a Decca autopilot type 450 incorporating tiller follow up and watch alarm facilities.

All communications equipment is by Marconi and includes a 400W. SSB radio telephone type T122/R105; Corvett type 225 VHF; Warden III watchkeeping receiver; Fishgraph K and Graphette K echo sounders; Callbuoy Mariner 16; lifeboat set and a Minicall talk-back panel and Herald sound reproduction and orders system.

The wheelhouse also contains the central alarm system for the unmanned machinery space and control panels for the accommodation and engine room fire detection equipment.

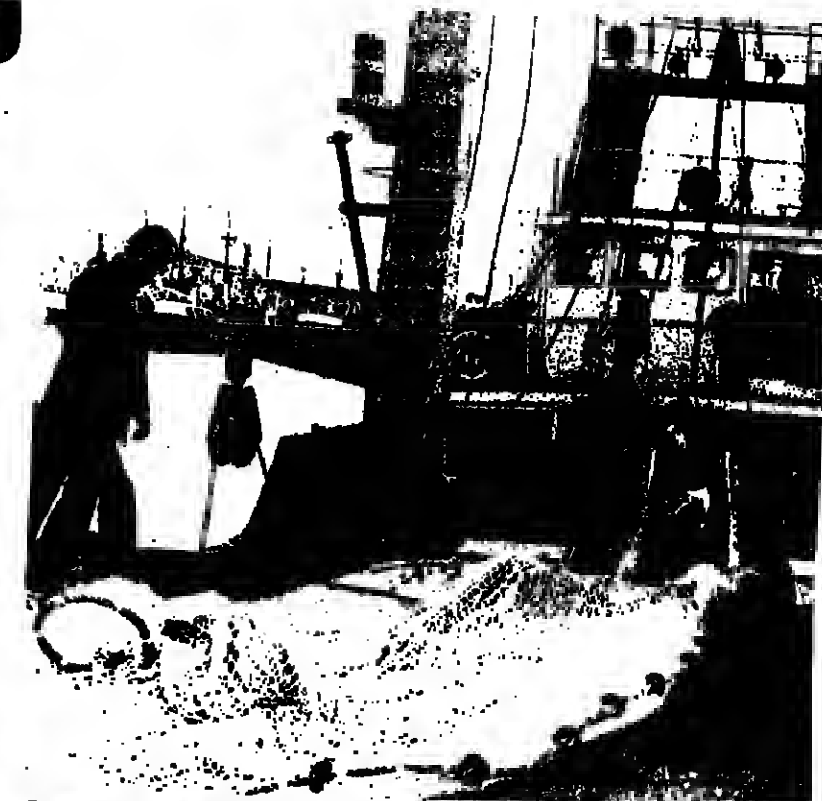
In command of this fine addition to the Boston fleet is Paul Meen, a man with considerable experience of stern trawling. He was formerly in command of *Boston Sea Dart*, and with this vessel became top skipper in 1974 at Lowestoft.

Skipper Meen and *Boston Sea King* would seem to be an ideal combination to ensure success, fishing the same North Sea grounds as the larger Lowestoft trawlers.

No doubt other owners at the port, frustrated by ever increasing fuel bills, have been casting anxious glances at the new *Boston Sea King* since her arrival from the Humber.

The second vessel of her class is expected to arrive at Lowestoft in about six months, and the third trawler is scheduled to enter service in approximately twelve months time — she will be named *Boston Sea Ranger*.

The object of the gap in time between the vessels being delivered is to allow for alterations and modifications to the design following operating experience with the first vessel.



Boston Sea King takes on a trawl at Lowestoft. She completed her maiden trip earlier this month and grossed £9,010 under Paul Meen, ex-skipper of *Boston Sea Dart*.

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Above: deck layout is similar to *Sea Dart*. Above, right: *Sea King's* wheelhouse is fitted with Fishgraph K and Graphette K sounders. Right: 700 bhp Mirraa-Blackstone main engine.

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Five Newlyn boats being sold off

FIVE trawlers in the Stevenson fishing fleet at Newlyn, Cornwall, have been put up for sale.

These are the four 74ft. steel pocket trawlers, built some 15 years ago, and a 30-year-old 75ft. wooden trawler.

This decision has been taken by the trawler firm, which has the largest fleet in the south west, because of the uncertain future of the fishing industry, plus the present high costs, with the severe inflation of recent years.

There are currently 14 boats in this Newlyn fleet, and the five advertised will be sold only as a fleet, at the end of this year, if a suitable price is offered.

It is not planned to buy other new trawlers to replace

these, for the firm will still have nine first-class units.

The Stevenson fleet landed over half of the white fish landed at Newlyn last year and, with its expanding export business, the firm is the biggest exporter of mackerel in the south west. The firm's lorries go nationwide and to the Continent.

Although there is a large number of fishermen and shore staff employed by the firm, it is not easy these days to get the men prepared to crew the larger boats.

FINDUS TO MOVE OUT

FINDUS is to close down its modern fish processing factory at Aberdeen over a run down period starting May 28.

The close down, to be completed by the end of August, will affect the jobs of 173 full-time, and just over 200 part-time, workers.

The shutdown is due to an alarming decline in the demand for the Aberdeen factory's products. The factory is the most modern in Europe and was opened in 1970.

Colin Birch, technical director, said the company invested £750,000 in Aberdeen to build the factory and it is particularly sad to announce its closure.

The Aberdeen factory, despite various economy and efficiency measures, has been running for 18 months at an unexpectedly high overhead cost level compared with the Humberide factories. The announcement continued that the firm could no longer afford to sustain this excess cost.

The remaining smoked production in Aberdeen will be transferred to the Cross and Blackwell factory at Peterhead and the fillet production to other Findus factories on Humberide.

The statement added that the drop in demand is not being felt in other Findus products, where demand is very satisfactory.

Last chance for grants

APPLICATIONS for grants from the Common Market FEOGA fund must be in by February 29.

Waid Morgan Associates of Dundee offer a 48-hour service on applications — if it is given all the necessary information. This firm can be contacted on Dundee 26581.

GUILD — 100 MEN DOWN

HULL Trawler Offshore Guild has lost about 100 skipper and mate members during the past year owing to the big reduction in the port's fishing fleet.

The guild's secretary, Skipper Tom Nielsen, reported this at the guild's annual meeting on Tuesday.

Commenting later to *Fishing News* he said: "Today we have discussed the falling membership, but there is little we can do about the matter if the owners are not running the ships owing to various difficulties the industry is facing. The situation could become even worse."

Income

"Meanwhile, a smaller guild membership has reduced its income and bigger annual subs have been decided on to keep the guild running."

Skipper Nielsen said that, among other items discussed at the guild's AGM had been catch quotas.

The Norwegians, he said, want a 200-mile fishing limit and there are fears that there could be a further reduction in the British catch quota.

Colne double

LOWESTOFT'S Colne Fishing Co. has claimed on earnings record for the Lowestoft fleet and sent a new stern trawler off on her maiden oil within a week. After St. Patrick smashed the earnings record for a Lowestoft trawler with a £16,673 grossing at Grimsby on Monday last week, Skipper David Bedford and his crew were presented with paws tankards by the owners. Seen celebrating (above) with champagne on Wednesday last week are: (left to right) C. Bessy, deckhand; J. Webster, second angler; E. Oerriman, mate; D. Bedford; B. Claridge, who made the presentation; D. Meir, chief engineer; and J. Cooks, deckhand. On Sunday morning Lowestoft's latest stern trawler, St. Phillip, left on her maiden. Pictured (right) in the warehouse just before she sailed is her skipper, John Peak. Built at the Rilehards yard at Great Yarmouth, the new craft was launched in November last year.

"I feel a great sense of vibrancy and I think it's a very exciting place to be."

"We don't want to be bed people into years of decline, but people like me, who are that impulsive, we can't help it."

His could not say a decision might be made on the trip of just £24 after everyone had settled up and all expenses were deducted.

Samarian scrapes a profit from top trip

SAMARIAN (Skipper Johnny Waddingham) came back from an 18-day Faroe trip last week with 875 kits, making owners Sir Thomas Robinson & Son (Grimsby) Ltd. a top trip and best grossing for months.

But in spite of this Frank Robinson, chairman and managing director, told *Fishing News*: "We showed a profit on the trip of just £24 after everyone had settled up and all expenses were deducted."

Clearly the profit margin, though better than a loss, emphasises the difficulties facing Grimsby's middle water owners, for Samarian at 131ft is typical of the vessels making up the backbone of this section.

In the past it has always been the distant water fleets which seemed in the gravest danger of collapse, but it is becoming painfully apparent that the squeeze is on everyone and, without some form of financial support very soon, more and more vessels will be laid-up.

RSW TANKS CLEAN-UP

TANK cleaning stations are being set-up in Norway following research into refrigerated sea water systems aboard fishing vessels. It is thought that harmful gases and bacteria can develop in the systems. The tank systems need three of four thorough cleanings a year with a liquid designed to dissolve fat, oil and protein.

RESCUE AWARD

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade's award for the most outstanding rescue of 1975 has gone to Serabster Auxiliary Coast Rescue Company.

It involved the Aberdeen trawler *Clarkwood* which ran aground near Dounreay in August.

Nine of the crew were hauled to safety by staff from the nearby Dounreay Atomic Station, but the other four, including the skipper, remained on board in a bid to refloat the vessel.

This was nearly successful, for at one stage *Clarkwood* was almost afloat, but a crashing wave forced her back on the rocks and, after four hours, the pounding seas began to take their toll of the trawler.

The steering system jammed and the vessel began taking in water. Only then did Skipper Charles Duncan and his men decide to leave.

"They were winched to safety by breeches buoy by the Serabster Auxiliaries, assisted by coastguards from Wick."

Frank Robertson, leader of the Serabster Company, said on hearing of the Department of Trade Award: "We are all delighted; it's a tremendous boost."

His team of 20 include atomic energy authority workers, farmers and fishermen.

Owners hit at Lowestoft boats as 'Flabby' plaice floods market

FIVE Lowestoft trawlers invaded Grimsby last week and just about flooded the markets with what some fish merchants called 'upalong' or 'flabby' plaice.

These are terms coined for out-of-season fish landed about this time of the year when the flesh is usually a bit thinner than later in the season.

However, the abundant supplies did not please everyone and some vessel operators were annoyed about the plaice dumping at Grimsby because the Lowestoft markets were saturated.

Coupled with heavy Danish overland imports, barely touched by tariffs, some Grimsby vessels loading plaice felt they should have got a better price.

Most of the fish sold, and that which didn't, was mostly swallowed up by petfood buyers. However, the market was well saturated by the weekend.

Bentley Queen (£8,960 from 151 kits) and St. Martin (£8,509 from 439 kits) both did quite well late in the week, but the best trip, averaging just short of £20 per kit, came from Suffolk *Kudavour* (£11,047 from 553 kits).

It was the first time since she was built in 1967 this trawler had made five figures.

The recent grosser St. Patrick (£14,374 from 925 kits) and *Constance Banks* (£11,315 from 648 kits) also landed.



Constance Banks grossed £11,315 from 648 kits at Grimsby.

Report puts coble plight in a 'nutshell'

THE NORTH of England Development Council has issued a report spotlighting the plight of inshore fishermen at Redcar, Cleveland.

The fishermen now have to meet a 2,400 per cent rise in the Road Fund Tax to license tractors used to tow their cobbles down to the sea (Fishing News, January 16).

The report has been issued in the hope that the appropriate authorities will take action to reduce the Road Fund Tax burden facing fishermen at the port.

For 27 years tractors used by Redcar fishermen to haul their boats to and from the sea have been licensed as agricultural vehicles at 26.65 per annum.

Following the recent Middlesbrough Court decision that the tractors cannot be classed as such, a Road Tax of 2144 per annum for haulage tractors has had to be paid.

The men feel that they are being treated with undue harshness. The 24 professional fishermen operate 12 full-time motorised cobbles, hauled by eight tractors.

According to James Arnold

King Thompson, Redcar's oldest fisherman, the first tractor for towing boats came to the port in 1949. This question then arose as to how it should be licensed.

Mr Thompson attended a meeting at Redcar seafront in 1949 with the chief fisheries officer, the district inspector of fisheries, an officer of HM Customs and Excise and (he believes) someone from the local authority.

They all agreed unanimously that the tractor should be taxed at the agricultural rate.

However, official records of the meeting do not appear to exist.

All was well until July 29, last year, when a tractor driven by local fisherman, Don Stockton, collided with a parked car on the Esplanade, Redcar, and led to a prosecution.

The defendant was charged with driving a tractor

applicable to a higher rate of tax than that paid, contrary to Section 18 (4) of the Vehicles Excise Act 1971.

It was argued that fishermen should get the same exemption as farmers because the lobster they land are, in fact, livestock.

The prosecution then stated that fishing fell outside the definition of agriculture as defined in Section 109 (3) of the Agriculture Act 1947.

The bench fined Mr. Stockton £50 and ordered him to pay £10 costs.

In December last year, Mr. G. G. Mountain, secretary of Redcar Fishermen's Society, put the facts to James Tinn, MP for Redcar, who then tabled a question to the Chancellor.

The question was then referred to Dennis Davies, Minister of State at the Treasury, who replied that, as these matters were being litigated, he could not comment.

As the question was considered sub-judice, in view of the pending hearing, Mr. Tinn noted the result when it was known and raised the matter once again with the Minister of State by correspondence. Mr Davies' full reply is awaited.

Mr. E. M. Hamley, chief executive of the Fisheries Organisation Society, said: "Everything which can be done will have our fullest and united backing."

"In all my nine years of experience in national negotiations and public inquiries on behalf of the fishing industry, I have seldom come across a case of such blatant injustice to the cause of inshore fishing."

MACKEREL TRIPS END

AS THE most hectic winter mackerel season Cornwall has known begins to draw to a close, the Hull freezer trawler *Orsino* was due to leave the Cornish grounds today (February 20).

The 1,100 ton BUT ship arrived in mid-November — and has been at the centre of a row over the dumping of dead mackerel.

This is strongly refuted by Derek Oswald, the BUT manager at Hull, who said: "She has been down there to catch fish, not dump it."

He said *Orsino* had done a series of 25-day trips, returning to Hull with catches of just under 500 tons for sale in the UK and on the Continent. She would next be going

after cod, but he thought the financial results of her Cornish season were "pretty good". It is likely she would return next winter.

Mr Oswald did not anticipate sending more than one trawler, however.

WHITBY Shellfish Co. which process scampi, is to increase its staff by a dozen women workers to 66.

This will increase weekly production, which now stands at 10,000 lb.

The business, which originally started 15 years ago in an old British Rail engine shed, now occupies an 8,000 sq. ft. factory in Larpool Lane, Scarborough.

Radioactive fish 'safe'

THERE HAS been an increase in the amount of radioactivity in Irish Sea fish as a result of waste from the nuclear power plant at Windscale, Cumbria.

But a scientist keeping a watch on the situation emphasised that there is no need for the consumer to worry.

The scientist, Dr. Neil Mitchell, head of the Government's Radiobiological unit at Lowestoft, said last week: "We have found an increased level of radioactivity. But we still have a very safe situation."

A report on last year's work in the Irish Sea shows that

people who ate fish regularly from the sea close to Windscale could be taking in radioactive substances sufficient to produce three per cent of the radiation dose limit recognised internationally.

But Dr. Mitchell said: "Even if the figure was 100 per cent it would not imply people dying from the effects of eating fish."

The reason for that, he said, is that the International Commission on Radiological Protection lays down its safety limits very much on the safe side in every way.

These findings result from samples taken from fishing vessels working in the Morecambe Bay area — some

from Fleetwood. The scientists also chartered boats from Whitehaven and used their own research vessels to fish the area for samples. "I don't think people need to be concerned," said Dr. Mitchell.

But he revealed that the trend to an increase in fish radioactivity in the area has led to plans for increased scientific work this year to monitor it.

In a few years' time the scientists will have more work on their hands — checking the effects on marine life of the nuclear power plant at Housham, on Morecambe Bay, which is at present under construction.

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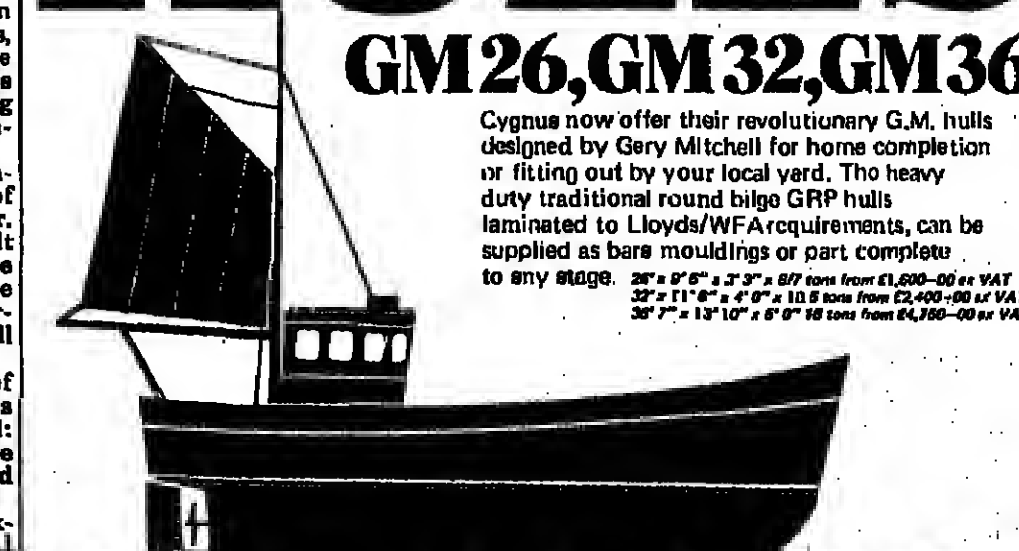
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